

# What's New in the MPDC

OCTOBER 22, 2001

## MPDC ENCOURAGES VIGILANCE AND COMMON SENSE IN RESPONDING TO SUSPICIOUS MAIL

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The MPDC encourages residents to be vigilant, but also careful and sensible, in responding to suspicious packages. First and foremost, individuals who encounter a suspicious package should not handle the package or attempt to transport it to a police station or other facility. Over the last week, at least two individuals with suspicious packages have taken those packages to an MPDC facility. This can pose dangers to the individual handling the package, as well as others. Rather, individuals should leave suspicious packages alone, move away from the area, and immediately contact the police. To report a suspicious package, DC residents should call either 3-1-1 (the police non-emergency number) or 9-1-1 if the package poses an immediate threat to public safety. Read the full public advisory at:

*DC's Website has extensive information about dealing with suspicious mail, family preparedness and anthrax threats. View the District's Emergency Preparedness page at:*

*[dc.gov/citizen/preparedness/index.shtm](http://dc.gov/citizen/preparedness/index.shtm)*

[mpdc.dc.gov](http://mpdc.dc.gov) (Click on News)

## CHIEF RAMSEY ANNOUNCES CHANGES IN HOMICIDE INVESTIGATIONS

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Chief Ramsey announced this week that the MPDC is taking a number of steps to improve the organization and management of homicide and other criminal investigations. By next January, the Department will expand and staff a centralized Violent Crimes Branch that will investigate homicides, serious AWIK (assault with intent to kill) offenses, serial rapes, pattern robberies and other major crimes that occur anywhere in the District. The unit will be headquartered at the ROC-East facility in the Penn-Branch Shopping Center, under the command of the Superintendent of Detectives. In addition, the MPDC is merging its Mobile Crime and district Crime Scene Search functions into a centralized Crime Scene Examination Unit, to be located at 3515 V Street, NE. This consolidation will promote quality and accountability in processing homicide and other crime scenes. The Chief said the changes are being made for a simple reason: while the District's overall crime rate (the homicide rate in particular) continues to decline, the MPDC's performance in solving homicides and other major crimes is still not where it should be.

*The DC Council's Committee on the Judiciary has scheduled a public oversight hearing for Tuesday, October 22 at 10 am, on the MPDC's performance in homicide investigations. Details at:*

*[www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us/Calend70.htm](http://www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us/Calend70.htm)*

## HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

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With Halloween just around the corner, parents and children are encouraged to review basic Halloween safety tips. Specifically, the MPDC encourages parents to ensure that their children's costumes are safe, that responsible adults accompany young children while they are trick-or-treating, and that young people follow general safety tips about walking on the street, approaching houses and handling candy. Get a full list of Halloween safety tips at:

[mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/halloweensafety.shtm](http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/halloweensafety.shtm)

## EARLY TRENDS ARE PROMISING WITH MPDC'S PHOTO RADAR PROGRAM

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*To learn more about the MPDC's  
red-light camera program, go to:  
[mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/  
redlight.shtm](http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtm)*

September statistics from the MPDC's photo radar speeding reduction program suggest some promising trends. The percent of vehicles exceeding the speed limit threshold has declined from 31 percent during the July warning period to 22 percent during September. Average speeds – especially in the lower mph zones – also appear to be declining. In 25 mph zones where photo radar is being deployed, the average vehicle speed has declined from 35.5 mph in July to 31.8 in August and 31.3 in September. In 30 mph enforcement zones, average speeds have declined from 37.6 mph to 34.0 mph during the same period. The photo radar program kicked off in early July, with actual tickets issued beginning on August 6<sup>th</sup>. During the first two months of the program, 31,220 tickets were mailed to violators, and 6,081 were paid, resulting in more than \$420,000 in fines. In September, just over half of the violators were from Maryland, one-third were from DC, 11 percent from Virginia and the remainder from other states. Detailed information about photo radar, including the results to date and the locations of the 60 enforcement zones, can be found at:

*Two DC Council committees have scheduled a public hearing for Monday, October 21 at 11 am, on the use of automated photo enforcement cameras to detect red light and speeding violations. More information at:*

*[www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us/  
Calend70.htm](http://www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us/Calend70.htm)*

[mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtm](http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtm)

## MAYOR WILLIAMS INVITES RESIDENTS TO SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC MAILINGS

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Mayor Williams this week announced the creation of two community e-mail lists that will allow constituents to stay in touch with developments in DC government. Residents who subscribe to the Mayor's District List will periodically receive materials on important policies and issues under consideration by the Mayor. Residents subscribing to the Mayor's Circle List will receive information on a weekly basis about the Mayor's public schedule, upcoming community events, and other items of citywide interest. To learn more and sign up for this new service, click on:

*Subscribers to [CrimeReports.com](http://CrimeReports.com) are encouraged to submit ideas or suggestions about this service to Kevin Morison, MPDC's director of corporate communications at:  
[kevin.morison@dc.gov](mailto:kevin.morison@dc.gov)*

[oco.eom.dc.gov/services/community\\_outreach/index.shtm](http://oco.eom.dc.gov/services/community_outreach/index.shtm)

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*Information, ideas or comments about this service?*

*E-mail Kevin Morison, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at [kevin.morison@dc.gov](mailto:kevin.morison@dc.gov).*

*Would you like to have this information emailed to you? Just go to our web site and register with [crimereports.com](http://crimereports.com).*

**METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT WEB PAGE**  
**MPDC.DC.GOV**